United Nations A/66/776–S/2012/246

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
23 April 2012
English
Original: Russian

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda items 34, 35, 39 and 67

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Prevention of armed conflict

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Letter dated 18 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the unremitting efforts by Azerbaijan to exploit the offices of the United Nations for the purposes of disseminating anti-Armenian propaganda and fabrications. The latest example of this is the letter from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 23 March 2012 (A/66/764-S/2012/204), drafted in full compliance with the lamentably well-known principle: "If you tell a big enough lie and you keep repeating it, in the end people will start believing it".

It is telling that the representative of Azerbaijan, voicing his indignation at the dissemination of a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh, does not refute a single one of the facts enunciated in that statement. Instead, the Azerbaijani letter follows the well-worn path of taking quotations out of context and deliberately misinterpreting them in order to distort the facts and denigrate the Armenian people and their leaders. It is worth noting here that even one of the authors so extensively quoted by the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan — Thomas de Waal — was constrained in February 2012 to express his displeasure at the way the "Azerbaijanis have ignored my admonition to treat the book as a whole and not to quote from it selectively" (see http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/24/president-interview-and-tragic-anniversary/9vpa).

The aggressive assertions by the representative of Azerbaijan come as no surprise to us — this is a country whose president, in his public pronouncements, describes all the Armenians in the world as fascists and enemies of Azerbaijan. The chauvinistic and anti-Armenian rhetoric issuing from Baku is, first and foremost, an

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endeavour by the leaders of Azerbaijan to shirk responsibility for the consequences of the military conflict which they unleashed and for the crimes which they committed. In this way, the Azerbaijani authorities are attempting to convert the rejection by their own people of the country's authoritarian hereditary regime into hatred for their neighbours and to cloak the true state of affairs in Azerbaijan, where human rights and democratic freedoms are rampantly flouted and any dissent is crushed.

By distorting both the essence of the Nagorny Karabakh problem and its causes and rejecting one after the other the recommendations by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Azerbaijan is holding up progress in the negotiating process for a peaceful settlement to the Karabakh conflict on the basis of the three principles of international law: non-use of force or the threat of force; self-determination of peoples; and territorial integrity.

It is also common knowledge that none other than the former President of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, after repeatedly failing to solve the problem through successive military attacks, conducted in breach of the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, gave authority, by his own signature, to top-ranking officials of Azerbaijan to conduct negotiations with representatives of the authorities of the Nagorny Karabakh Republic, while he himself met in person with the leader of Nagorny Karabakh. It was precisely thanks to such direct negotiations with Nagorny Karabakh that a ceasefire agreement was concluded between Nagorny Karabakh and Azerbaijan, and also joined by Armenia.

The authorities of Nagorny Karabakh, who have been deprived of the possibility of providing their own direct response in international organizations to the propaganda and fabrications put about by Azerbaijan, which run entirely counter to the efforts by the international community to settle the conflict, are naturally obliged to appeal to the representatives of Armenia at international organizations, including the United Nations, requesting them to put forward the position of Nagorny Karabakh in response to the insinuations made by Azerbaijan.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 34, 35, 39 and 67, and also as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Garen **Nazarian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative